

THE DRINK TANK



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So, I'm back. You probably guessed that I would be, possibly because I said I likely would bring The Drink Tank back someday.

And that day has somed.

First off, let us all thrill to the AMAZING Brad Foster cover! The man has been so good to all of us over the years, and this one makes me SMILE!!!!

Folks asked me why I stopped doing the zine, and many others simply assumed it was because I got married, had a couple of kids and moved to the mountains. Those of you who follow closely will remember that I announced I would be ceasing publication in 2015 back in early 2014, in the Twin Peaks issue. Basically, ten years was a long time, and it happened that I got married, had kids, and moved to the mountains at the same time. Yeah, it was a mid-life crisis, and one that ended up with me being called "Papa" by two adorable little rugrats who are also soul-sucking monsters.

Three years isn't super-long for a zine to silent, but for me, it's something like an eternity. In that time, I've had a wedding, watched my two boys get born, started a few podcasts, run a couple of film festivals, and done a bunch of interviews with really cool people like Mark Mothersbaugh of Devo. All of this is stuff I'll be writing about in up-coming issues.

Probably the biggest reason for me bringing it all back is the pair of maniacs I call my sons: Benji and JohnPaul. They're whacky, and loving, and mean, and sweet, and tough, and tender, and everything in between. The one thing is they were never around for me to have them in The Drink Tank. That felt weird. The zine that defined my 30s should somehow meet the kids that will define my 40s, I think. There was also the sad passing of two friends: Randy Byers and Milt Stevens. They were two people I respected the hell out of and they left us too early. Randy's we knew was coming, but when it happened it still hurt so bad, but Milt was a shock. I learned so much from him chatting in fan lounges over the years. I miss them both so terribly. WorldCon is going to be tough without Randy and Milt. And Dave Kyle. And Dave Rohm. And on and on.

I'm writing this on the fourth week of my five week vacation during which I'm taking care of the wife and kids as Vanessa recovers from her surgery. It's been a hard time, lots to do, and at the same time, I'm trying to keep up with the outside world, which is harder than you think.

So, why issue 401? Well, I have two issues lined up already with new editors Doug Berry and Alissa McKersie. There's an issue about Heavy Metal Music with a focus on Horror themes. It's one I've wanted to do for a while now. Then there's the 1980s issue that I've been working with Alissa on since the boys were still in Lucille Packard's Childrens' Hospital. It's been a while, and I think it'll be an issue I will certainly enjoy.

Which does beg the question as to what, exactly, The Drink Tank 2.0 will be. I'm not 100% sure, it is still The Drink Tank after all, but I would say it'll be more like the kind of zine we saw in 2014, themes, slower schedule, more stuff from more people, bigger ideas. That sort of thing. I'm not expecting more than 6 issues this year, but who knows? I do tend to shock even myself.

So, those of you who don't follow me on Facebook are probably not aware of many of the changes in my life, and I hope you'll enjoy catching up. I'm gonna be the Fan Guest of Honor at BayCon at the end of the month, which is oddly symmetrical to the year 2005, when I launched the Drink Tank the same year that I was Toastmaster. Weird, huh?

So, this is the brief reintroduction issue, and one where I'm happy to say, I'm back.



I've filled the days and weeks of the Drink Tank's absence with podcasts: both listening and creating them. No, it was not Serial that got me into podcasts. In fact, I'd been appearing on podcasts since at least 2007, and producing them since 2009 or so. The first was The Drink Tank Review of Books, where I reviewed books. The second was Leaf & Let Die, my tea-drinking podcast. It wasn't until 2015 that I really started working on 'em, and I think that was when I finally did Match of the Year podcast, followed by Registry, and from there more and more and more!

Each Podcast I do is based around an idea, and often that idea comes from the podcasts I'm listening to. It's not a "I can do that better!" idea, or even a "Me Too!" idea. It's most like "Yeah, that sounds like it could be fun!" and thus I'll take off in my own direction.

Registry – 44 Episodes since 2016

The National Film Registry really is my jam, and the National Recording Registry is also a wonderful thing. They were set up by the Library of Congress to recognize films and sound recordings that were "historically, culturally, and aesthetically important" to the evolution of their medium. The hundreds of choices on each are almost all phenomenal, and I'm glad I can help bring a bit more attention to the lists.

The two big podcasts that got me thinking in this direction are the film podcasts, The Slums of Film History and You Must Remember This. You Must Remember This is a history podcast that takes deep looks at important moments from Hollywood history. It tackles it from a very Gen-X sort of point of view, and it is incredibly engaging. The Slums of Film History looks at the lesser-known, and usually lesser-loved, genres of film, including direct-to-video releases, and makes the case for them in the context of a particular theme, such as Deals with the Devil, Nudity, or Satanic Panic. It's a great show.

Almost all the episodes look at a single film that either deserves to be on the Registry that is not, or a film that is included. I'm happy to say that two films I've listed over the years have made it onto the Registry after I've done episodes on them: The Atomic Café and The Sinking of the Luisitania. It's an interesting listen if you like Esoteric lists like I do. You can find it at <https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/registry-a-podcast/id1079092164?mt=2> or <https://podcastmachine.com/podcasts/19407>

Three Minute Modernist – 156 episodes since 2016

I've always loved art. And Museums. And Curators. And brevity. There are numerous arts podcasts, and I love them! The three biggest influences on me were the incredible I Don't Hate This: The Avantest-garde podcast, and The Art History Babes. The one that influenced the form I chose, doing three minute eps, was from the Dr. Who podcast Two Minute Timelord.

Mostly, I pick a single work, or sometimes a single artist or exhibit, and I'll talk about it, or what it means to me, for three minutes. It focuses you to have to spend so little time trying to make a work of art accessible to an audience in three minutes, but it seems to work.

I occasionally do interviews with Curators or artists as well. So far, I think the biggest name I've managed to get was Chip Lord, 1/2 of the famed duo Ant Farm. I've talked to curators and directors, and filmmakers and video artists and more. It's fun to do the episodes, and not just because it lets me work with the kind of folks I love to chat with!

You can listen to it at <https://itunes.apple.com/kh/podcast/three-minute-modernist/id1136019028> or <http://threeminutemodernist.weebly.com/>

Match of the Year Podcast – 66 episodes since 2015

This is my wrestling podcast, and it was brought about by not having any wrestling podcasts I really enjoyed. I want history, but I also want something that looks at wrestling in a serious way, but not a dry way. That's asking a lot, I think, and I am often shocked by how far out of balance I get.

The best part about doing the podcast is going back over years of wrestling matches and reliving some of the finest moments of my life. The matches are great, I only talk about the good ones, and the memories are amazing.

If you like wrestling, there's a fair bit here for ya - <https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/match-of-the-year-podcast/id1045060782?mt=2> or at <http://matchoftheyearpodcast.weebly.com/>

Zodiac Speaking – 5 episodes since February 2018

True Crime has been thoroughly revitalized through podcasts. What once was the domain of magazines like Hush-Hush or Murder Can Be Fun, it's given us podcasts like Criminal. There are several sub-genres, including the Comedy True Crime Podcast, such as Last Podcast on the Left and My Favorite Murder. There's Crime In Sports, which was an influence, but really, it was the Payne Lindsey podcast Up and Vanished that influenced me the most. It was about a single crime, and it caused Change. I don't think Zodiac Speaking will lead to any arrests, but it's a topic that devotees will remember was the theme for an issue of Claims Department last year.

My one difference is the focus I try to put on the victims. I'm not going to spend most of my time talking about the suspects, though I will a little, but instead how the victims lived, and what the killer meant to the world. It's a bit heavy, but I love doing it. You can hear it at

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/zodiac-speaking/id1349599132?mt=2>

Fantasy Film 101 – 32 Episodes since January 2017

If you remember the podcast version of 52 Weeks to Science Fiction Film Literacy, called 52 Episodes to Science Fiction Film Literacy, this is the follow-on. It's meant to be an examination of concepts within Fantasy films, largely focusing on films from the 1980s and prior.

Well, sometimes.

The key to it is that it's not a look at a film, but an idea that is represented by such a film. When I looked at LA Story, I was looking at the use of a modern urban setting as a way to make what would have been less than magical into something truly wonderful. Or the idea of Lore being the equivalent of technology in a science fiction film. You can find it at <https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/fantasy-film-101/id1242956050?mt=2> or <http://klausatgunpoint.weebly.com/fantasy-film-101>

SiliGone Valley – 60 episodes since October 2017

This is the one that's got the most press, being featured in the Metro newspaper in San Jose, and it's the one that is the hardest to do emotionally. It basically me talking about places that I grew up with in my life that are gone. There've been movie theatres, restaurants, statues, shows, rides at amusement parks, and so many more.

Silicon Valley is no longer what it was, nor will it ever be again, and the way I look at it tries and make a personal connection between buildings and places and people, mostly myself. I'm about to launch a look at science fiction conventions of San Jose that have come and gone. You can listen to it at <https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/siligone-valley/id1245905907?mt=2> or <http://siligonevalley.weebly.com/siligone-valley>

